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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/977,261	10/16/2001	Axel Ullrich	038602-1259	2715

7590 06/18/2003

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EXAMINER

SEHARASEYON, JEGATHEESAN

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

1647

DATE MAILED: 06/18/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/977,261	ULLRICH ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Jegatheesan Seharaseyong	1647	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 1 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 23 July 2002.

2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1,2,7,10,11,14,15,23,26,29 and 30 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) _____ is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) 1,2,7,10,11,14, 14, 15,23,26,29 and 30 are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

11) The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) approved b) disapproved by the Examiner.

If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.

12) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

13) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a) All b) Some * c) None of:

1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

14) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).

a) The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.

15) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)	4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)	5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____	6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C. 121:

- I. Claims 1, 2, 7, 10 and 26 are drawn to a nucleic acid encoding the MKK polypeptide, a vector and a host cell, classified in class 536, subclass 23.5 and class 435, subclass 69.1.
- II. Claims 11 is drawn to antisense molecules, classified in class 536, subclass 24.3.
- III. Claims 14, 15 and 20 are drawn to MKK proteins, classified in class 530, subclass 350.
- IV. Claim 23 is drawn to antibodies that recognize the MKK proteins, classified in class 530, subclass 388.1.
- VI. Claims 29 and 30 are drawn to a method of inhibiting signal transduction, classified in class 435, subclass 6.

The inventions are distinct, each from the other, for the following reasons:

Inventions I, II, III and IV are independent and distinct, each from the other, because they are products which possess characteristic differences in structure and function and each has an independent utility that is distinct for each invention which cannot be exchanged. The polynucleotide of invention I can be used to make a hybridization probe or can be used in gene therapy as well as in the production of the protein of interest. The antisense molecule of invention II can be used for gene therapy as well as inhibit the expression of the MKK proteins. The polypeptide of invention III

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can be used as a probe or used therapeutically or diagnostically, e.g. in screening. The antibody of invention IV can be used to obtain the polypeptide of Group III, and can also be used in diagnostics, e.g. as a probe in immunoassays. In addition, the searches are not coextensive for these products.

Inventions I and V are related as product and process of use. The inventions can be shown to be distinct if either or both of the following can be shown: (1) the process for using the product as claimed can be practiced with another materially different product or (2) the product as claimed can be used in a materially different process of using that product (MPEP § 806.05(h)). In the instant case the product of invention I can be used in gene therapy or in production of the recombinant protein.

Inventions (II-IV) and V are unrelated. Inventions are unrelated if it can be shown that they are not disclosed as capable of use together and they have different modes of operation, different functions, or different effects (MPEP § 806.04, MPEP § 808.01). In the instant case the different inventions are not disclosed as capable of use together.

In addition, the searches are not coextensive for these inventions. Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art as shown by their different classification, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

2. The claims of Groups I and III are drawn to multiple nucleic acid sequences (SEQ ID NO: 1-6). Each of the different nucleic acid sequences are independent and distinct because no common structural or functional properties are shared. Accordingly, these sequences are each subject to restriction under 35 U.S.C. § 121. Regardless of the

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Group elected, Applicant is additionally required to elect a single nucleic acid sequence, which if determined to be patentable, would also be patentably distinct from the other nucleic acid sequences. This requirement is made under 1192 O.G.68 Notice (November 19, 1996), as examination of more than one sequence in one application would result in an undue burden on the PTO.

3. Applicant is advised that the reply to this requirement to be complete must include an election of the invention to be examined even though the requirement be traversed (37 CFR 1.143).

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jegatheesan Seharaseyon whose telephone number is 703-305-1112. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F: 8:30-4:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Gary Kunz can be reached on 703-308-4623. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-308-0294 for regular communications and 703-308-4227 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-308-0196.

Gary D. Kunz
GARY KUNZ
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 1600

JS
June 18, 2003